Causes and immediate outcomes of the 1789 Revolution

Events before the 1789 period

Economic problems before 1789

Inefficient tax system of the Ancien Regime, burden was placed on the poor peasants of the Third Estate only (it was not shared by the nobility or the clergy), meant that it could not meet its debts exacerbated by participation in the American Revolutionary War, and also due to the excessive spending by the royal family.

A series of poor harvests led to rising prices and the resulting economic and social distress all helped create a febrile political atmosphere.

Necker and his resignation

Necker's publication of the first ever balance sheet of the French monarchy's finances provoked controversy at court and undermined his position in government

Conservatives at the court, such as the Foreign Minister, were appalled at the publication. They believed that the king's subjects had neither the need nor the right to know the state of the kingdom's finances. Such public airing of government issues was fine for a country such as Britain, but it was not the French way. Critics of Necker claimed that revenue was overestimated and expenses such as the cost of war in America were omitted. Necker was deliberately misleading the king and the country.

It was claimed that the aim was not to provide a true account of the kingdom's accounts but to bolster Necker's own position against his rivals at court, who questioned how long loans alone could sustain finances.

His request, following publication, to be admitted to the king's innermost council, despite being Swiss and a Protestant, seemed to show he was interested only in his advancement.

On the advice of Maurepas and de Vergennes, who both threatened to resign if their advice was ignored, Louis XVI refused Necker's request. Necker then resigned.

The Assembly of Notables - why did they meet?

There was an urgent need to deal with the precarious state of France's finances. The deficit stood at 112m livres, a quarter of expected income and nearly half of annual revenue was absorbed by debt service. Government credit was exhausted, and the country faced bankruptcy. Economies in government and court expenditure were popular, but would save only about 30%, at the most, of total expenses.

The problem for the government was to increase revenue without attacking the fiscal privileges of the clergy and nobility. This, however, was impossible as indirect taxes on consumer goods were insufficient. This meant that the fiscal exemptions of the First and Second Estates would have to be addressed.

Calonne, Controller-General of Finances since 1783, believed the solution lay with the calling of an Assembly of Notables. It was assumed that, as all the members were royal nominees, they would agree to rubber-stamp Calonne's plan for a new graduated land tax. This public show of backing from the leading men of the country for Calonne's plan would result in further loans being available.

The Enlightenment

Did it cause/influence the Revolution?

The Enlightenment stressed the prominence of reason rather than that of tradition. It was a challenger to absolute monarchy and the Ancien Regime, as well as its principal supporter the Church. It also emphasised individual liberty and the consent of the governed (Locke/Rousseau).

The success of the American Revolution, with its espousal of Enlightenment ideals, inspired many Frenchmen who had served in America to play prominent roles in the French Revolution. Aristocratic proponents of the Decrees such as the Duc D'Aigullion had seen service in America in the 1770s and, undoubtedly, were driven by Enlightenment ideas.

This clearly influenced the demands brought by the Third Estate to vote by head rather than vote by estate, and acted as an influence on the setting up of the National Assembly and the Tennis Court Oath, swearing to remain in session until a constitution had been abolished.

The August Decrees created a fundamental change to the Ancien Régime. The domination and privilege of the few were stripped away and seemed to herald a society based on the individual, equality, and merit, and can be seen as a means to rationalise the political system of the Ancien Regime by ending feudalism and privileges to the clergy and nobility. These ideas were in accord with the Enlightenment and placed emphasis on the rational in the running of society and disapproved of the accretion of rights for a select few, sanctioned by custom alone.

The abolition of the tithe halved the income of the Church. Thus, the influence of the Church would be lessened, something advocates of the Enlightenment strongly favoured.

Estates General

Why was the Estates General called?

Ministers appointed by the King and the Assembly of Notables failed to devise a suitable and acceptable solution to the huge range of problems, financial issues in particular, faced by the Ancien Regime in France. A series of ministers had come and gone, most of them dismissed by the King for not providing solutions acceptable to him. The Assembly of Notables also wanted to keep their power and status and did not guide the monarchy appropriately and wanted to protect their interests before the people's, and failed to provide answers, as was the parlements.

There was a major social and economic crisis looming, the country was bankrupt and economic distress in many areas caused by bad weather and harvests caused a great deal of worry and social disorder among the populace. There was also a growing awareness of the failures of the Ancien Regime and many lost faith in the governance of the country. The inability to provide solutions created a crisis of confidence amongst the money markets in the French government's financial stability and credit was becoming more and more problematic to obtain.

It was thus determined that the calling of the Estates General for the first time in 150 years would provide the sanction needed for new taxes and changes in France. It was felt that the Estates General would provide the means to create new taxes and other changes to fix what was wrong with the system.

Why were there divisions?

- The diversity of issues raised in the cahiers requiring changes.
- The divisions within the clergy, the higher/aristocratic members, and the lower clergy. Many of

the latter sympathised with the more radical demands of the Third Estate. There was a rich v poor division. There were also thinkers like Sieyés.

- There were many divisions within the aristocracy, again between the rich and the poor, those strongly opposed to any change in their status and privileges and the more radical like Lafayette. There were some who felt there had to be change in order to survive.
- There were huge divisions within the Third Estate, ranging from quite conservative constitutional monarchists to much more radical antimonarchists who were demanding real social, economic, and political change.
- There were the major divisions between the Estates, over voting for example.
- There were further divisions between, for example, those who came from urban as opposed to rural areas.

Why did the Estates General fail?

Procedure: There was uncertainty because the previous meeting of the institution had been in 1614. Therefore, no one was sure how it should proceed. It was agreed that the Estates General represented three groups: clergy, nobility, and others. However, there were serious differences about voting, including how decisions should be made.

Over optimistic: The cahiers raised expectations in the country and amongst the deputies that the Estates General would bring about a fundamental overhaul of France. However, as an institution of the Ancien Regime it could never meet these expectations.

Lack of guidance: Finance was a major issue facing France, but the cahiers (lists of grievances sent to the Estates General) were contradictory in the solutions they proposed, as there had been no royal direction in their production, and this fed through to the early debates.

In summary:

The deputies of the Estates General called for social, economic, and political reform and drew up a long list of grievances. However, they argued about whether they would vote by head or order. The third estate would outnumber the other two if they voted by head. This produced a deadlock as the King offered only weak support to the First and Second Estates but did not make any decisions or enforce his own will. The First and Second Estates, the clergy and the nobility, were unable to work with the Third Estate – the latter seeing itself as the most representative of all the three Estates.

The National Assembly, the Tennis Court Oath and the Fall of the Bastille

The establishment of the National Assembly

The Third Estate began meeting without the consultation of the other two and on 17 June declared itself the National Assembly of France. They were gradually joined by some of the nobles and the majority of the clergy. On 17 June 1789, the Third Estate, infuriated by the attitudes of the other two Estates, adopted the ideas of Sieyes that sovereignty lay with the majority of the people of France, and that they represented that majority. As a result, only they could decide on tax.

The indecision of the King and the growing sense of a national crisis were also factors.

With the King declaring their actions null and void, which appeared to add to their credibility, and being increasingly joined by many of the lower clergy and some of the nobility, there was a general

acceptance that this 'National Assembly' spoke for France.

The Tennis Court Oath

On 20 June they discovered that they had been locked out of the Chamber and, fearing a royal attack, the deputies adjourned to the nearest building, a tennis court. Here they took the Tennis Court Oath and vowed that they would not separate and continue to meet until 'the constitution of the kingdom is established'.

The Tennis Court Oath was taken by the Third Estate to show their solidarity and determination that the King should make concessions. It was a sign of their protest. The oath can be seen as a revolutionary act and an assertion that political authority derived from the people and their representatives rather than the monarch himself.

Attack of the Bastille

The attack of the Bastille that followed was a culmination of a series of events which went back to the summoning of the Estates General.

There had been very high hopes that the meeting of the Estates General would lead to real social, economic and political change. By July 1789 it clearly had not.

There was also real hunger in Paris and real concern over the rise in prices for foodstuffs and wine. Fear, rumour, royal indecision and incompetence, coupled with a breakdown in law and order in Paris in the three days before the 'storming', led to a very tense atmosphere.

The Bastille, seen as a symbol of royal authority in Paris, was an obvious target, even though it actually represented no real threat to the insurgency. It was used as a store for gunpowder and weapons and the Parisians, fearing reprisals from the King, wanted to gain access to these.

The king's opposal to reform

The king's actions during this period

Frustration with the king created new issues: Louis XVI sought to keep the Estates General's voting bias which discriminated against the Third Estate. In response it challenged the king's power when it voted to call itself the National Assembly and claimed it had the right to decide on matters of taxation. This had never been a reason for the calling of the Estates General.

His bad faith: Whilst the new National Assembly was becoming more strident, the fear grew, which was not unfounded, that Louis XVI was seeking to deploy additional troops in Paris to restore his authority. This led to disorder, e.g., the storming of the Bastille. The end of the Estates General had come a little earlier (9th. July) when the National Constituent Assembly was formed. Using the Estates General, an old institution of the Ancien Regime, had shown that the issues France faced could only be dealt with by new institutions based on new ideas.

Before the storming of the Bastille, there was also a strong fear that the King would use a growing number of foreign mercenaries to impose his rule on the Parisians rather than use French soldiers whose loyalty to the crown was doubtful.

The king's opposal to reform

The King couldn't accept that there had to be limits to his powers, and in the future he was to rule with the consent of the people unlike how it was before the Revolution; the idea of compromise was alien to

him, and was unwilling to make decisions.

He was stubborn and reluctant to accept reality, and the concept of 'Divine Rights of Kings' was very important to him as monarch and saw it as something that could not just be watered down or modified. He was a profound conservative as well, and had taken a solemn coronation oath promising to uphold the Ancien Regime.

There was huge pressure from his courtiers and his wife who surrounded him in Versailles to ignore the demands for change from below and there was a lack of clarity on such demands from his side. Many amongst the clergy and nobility, the first and second Estates, were also opposed to any change. He was too easily influenced by those who surrounded him and incapable of following through any serious programme of change.

Many radicals also pushed for a republic and even a constitutional monarchy may not have been acceptable to them. The enormity of the many demands to change was also a factor.

The August Decrees

The August Decrees were issued because of the pressure of immediate events. They were designed to restore calm in the country and to placate the peasants, following the storming of the Bastille (July 14 1789) turmoil was created, which spread from Paris to the countryside.

This was known as the 'Great Fear' and saw noble families attacked and property destroyed. This frightened the property owners of the National Constituent Assembly, as the attacks on property were made, often, irrespective of whether they were noble owned. They had no means available, however, to restore order by force.

Against this background members of the Breton Club felt that only a grand gesture such as completely transforming the nation's social organisation would calm the peasants and restore order. This heightened atmosphere, it has been suggested, led deputies to go further in their proposals than, perhaps, they first intended. Aristocrats' proponents had a history of support for the cause of patriotic liberty. There was a perception that they were not posturing but were driven by idealism.

Instability of the French governments from 1790-95

Revolutionary and counter-revolutionary groups (their views and aims)

Revolutionary groups

Political clubs such as the Jacobins, were set up during the Revolution as there was a complete lack of leadership and effective policies by the King and his ministers, so something had to fill the void. There was considerable political inexperience amongst the membership of the Convention/Assembly. An element of regionalism was present with deputies from the Gironde formed the Girondins.

The Clubs provided policies, debate, and a degree of leadership and coordination necessary for anything to happen in the Assembly. They also provided centres where, for example, the pro and anti-war factions could meet, or those supporting or opposing the execution of the King.

Some were enthusiastic about the execution of the monarchy and it was a definite aim for them, for others it was something rather imposed on them. An end to the Ancien Regime and a move towards a much more egalitarian society was certainly a factor that united them all.

Views and aims of the revolutionaries

The attitude and actions of the King, with his refusal to seriously compromise his position and consider a constitutional monarchy was important. The ‘treason’ behind the flight to Varennes was also critical. The role of his wife and the immediate court did not help either.

There was a background of war, which heightened tension and gave rise to conflicting loyalties and nationalistic feelings. There were inevitably many conflicting political and constitutional views, ranging from those who wanted modest reform of the Ancien Regime to those with much more radical views whose influence grew after the actions of the King and his foreign ‘allies’.

There were rapidly changing social and economic conditions throughout France as well which posed a great range of challenges which influenced those at the centre of events.

Counter-revolutionary movement

Why did it emerge?

There was still genuine support for the monarchy and the Ancien Regime. The fear of moving into uncharted territory from the political and constitutional point of view. The nobility and higher clergy wanted to defend their privileges and wealth. There was a fear of radicalism and a dislike of the radical revolutionary changes such as the seizure of wealth of the church and features such as the new calendar. The extremes of the Jacobins and the Terror, support from abroad, such as from Austria and the British, and dislike in the regions of the increasing domination of the capital were also factors.

Why was the movement a failure?

<u>Internal divisions</u>

Internal divisions among these counter-revolutionary groups also weakened them, and there was no clear leader to lead the movement. Some wanted a restoration of the monarchy and the Ancien Regime

and some agreed that concessions had to be made with the revolutionaries for the sake of the country.

The leadership was consistently divided in their objectives.They were bitterly divided over a whole range of vital issues, the role of the Church, constitutionalism, foreign support as well as regional clashes. There was simply no sign of any concerned action. Generally, they were out of touch with French public opinion, particularly over whether to accept the ‘gains’ of 1789–1791.

There was no agreement on what their objectives should be, either to restore the Ancien Régime or to accept at least a move towards a constitutional monarchy of some type. The incompetence of the King’s leadership did not help prior to his execution and furthered the appeal of republicanism.

In many cases, those opposed to change were linked with Austria and Prussia which made them appear to be committing treason and went counter to the growing appeal of nationalism. Many who were monarchists at heart moved to neutrality over the issue of war.

Some wanted a complete return to the Ancien Regime, and others were prepared to contemplate a constitutional monarchy. There was a real unwillingness to accept that there had to be real change by any in a senior position.

Some were prepared to consider the abolition of privilege, others were not. There was never a good leader, the heir after the execution of the King was an infant, who died young. The eventual Louis XVIII seemed happier in safe retirement in England.

Too many of the leaders were also overly concerned with arguing over trivia, such as whether someone was ‘noble’ enough to be accepted in their ranks.

Lack of effective support

They also lacked effective support from foreign powers, some attempted to fight against France especially between 1792-93, however none were able to defeat the revolutionary government. The French army proved superior to all and managed to defend itself from any invaders. There was limited and often erratic foreign support, and often other countries such as the British had other motives to support a return to the Ancien Regime. The lack of quality foreign support from Austria was also a factor.

The counter-revolutionaries’ support for the war against their own country made them look like traitors while the military successes of the Republic weakened their cause and limited their support.

Support in France, in the Vendee and Brittany for example, was inconsistent and had varying motives. Many potential supporters were often unwilling to leave their home regions.

Strong nationalistic feelings present were on the side of the revolutionaries once Austria and Prussia had shown their hostility. While some of the ideas of the revolutionaries appalled, many had an appeal.

The main reason the counter-revolutionary movement failed is because they failed to realise that the majority of the French populace did not want to return back to the absolutist monarchy and the Ancien Regime again, instead they welcomed the gains of the revolution till date. These groups simply lacked the ability to realise that the majority in France at the time simply did not wish for the return to the monarchy, and most wanted a constitutional monarchy or at least a democratic system of government. Most people did not want to go back to the Ancien Regime they so deeply hated.

Support for the revolutionary movement

The overwhelmingly popular demand for the ‘gains’ of 1789–91 made any chance of attaining a

restoration of anything resembling the Ancien Regime highly unlikely. Most French people wanted to retain many of the gains of 1789-91. When there was foreign support, it was seen as treasonable by many to actually link up with it.

Reforms of the French society and government by the end of 1792

It was clear to many that by 1789, after the fall of the Bastille, a wider national uprising and the 'Great Fear', that fundamental change had to happen. There was fundamental reform because a National Assembly followed by the Legislative Assembly, was seen as the focal point of government in France. Following the Tennis Court Oath, the fall of the Bastille and the Great Fear there had to be real change and that was accepted by most, if not by the King.

The new Constitution represented a massive change from the way in which France had been governed in the past and by the end of 1789 Feudalism had gone, along with the glaring inequities of the Ancien régime. The Declarations of the Rights of Man and Citizenship were in place and the monarchy had been reduced in status and given its 'suspensive' veto.

The fact that this formerly 'divine' institution was modified was in itself significant. Furthermore, the Church was in effect nationalised and the new Civil Constitution of the Clergy was a major social change.

There were a number of issues that the previous National Constituent Assembly had left unresolved, for example the Civil Constitution to the Clergy. The assembly passed legislation decreed that all clergymen must take the civic oath (essentially the same as the previous oath of loyalty to the republic). If the oath is not taken his pension may be lost or deportation if necessary would be done. The legislation also ended clerical privilege and, although reluctantly accepted by the King, (which of course gave it a degree of legitimacy) was enshrined the major gains of the revolution to date.

The 'Bonfire of Privilege' when feudalism effectively went, happened as early as August 1789. So many of the institutions of the Ancien régime which had perpetrated inequality such as the Parlements, the Provincial Estates and taxes like the gabelle, had gone. Additionally the National Assembly, which in its own way became a very representative institution, became accepted as the 'leader' of France while the hereditary nobility, with its attendant privileges, was abolished.

With local elections and judicial reform coming into force, these also represented a significant change. Local government was run by local people on a remarkably democratic basis and tax equality arrived. Elected JPs started to manage the judicial process locally and the concept of equality before the law became rapidly established.

The Legislative Assembly believed that emigres had betrayed France and passed legislation to deal with them. They established a three-class hierarchy of emigres as well as the punishments that would correspond with each class - in order to protect the nation from counter-revolutionary activity from the emigres. (later they banned the emigres from ever returning to France).

However, the King, always reluctant to accept any change except those forced on him, still in a position of influence, the extent to which these reforms were really accepted could be open to question.

Many felt that the work done by the end of 1791 in ending the excesses of the Ancien régime was sufficient progress and were opposed to any radical move forwards towards a more democratic and egalitarian society.

There was also a growing counter - revolutionary movement and a real threat of possible invasion from Austria and Prussia which could eliminate the changes to date. Changes had been made but how

secure they were was open to question. Finally, the flight to Varennes increased opposition to the continued role of the monarchy despite its inclusion in the revised constitution of Sept 1791.

The 'revolution' was still in a tenuous position by the end of 1792. The King, although under arrest, was still a potential threat to the changes and had been distinctly lukewarm in his acceptance of the Constitution. Austria and Prussia were major military powers and gathered their forces to destroy the budding revolution.

There was also real hunger and poverty in France which could undermine the gains made and there were still major social groups who were opposed to the changes such as many of the soigneurs and the clergy.

Lawyers, members of the Parlements and office holders like collectors of the taille were potential opponents of the new ideas, and there were still many with a vested interest in the Ancien Régime who were not supporters of the changes.

Finally the 'revolutionaries' were bitterly divided between those who simply opposed the excesses of the Ancien Regime and those who wanted radical political and social change.

Demands for reform, foreign threats and the impact of war on France

Flight to Varennes

In 1791, Louis XVI attempted to flee from France as he felt that Paris was restricting him from carrying out his duties as monarch. He did not accept the Civil Constitution of the Clergy enacted by the National Assembly and was insincere when accepting the decrees after the October Days. He also may have been influenced by his Austrian wife and courtiers to flee from France to probably receive support from foreign powers such as Austria.

There was simple incompetence on his part was the main reason he attempted to flee, however he may have tried to gain support from foreign powers in order to reclaim his position as absolute monarch.

The flight of Varennes provoked a strong reaction. It showed that Louis failed to understand the popularity of the reforms made since 1789, and that he was against the Revolution - this made the people question if he was able to remain as head of state. It was also apparent to the people that the King was looking to gain support from the queen's Austrian relatives so that France would be 'liberated' by foreign powers to reinstate the absolute monarchy which had existed before. The courtiers also appeared to be determined to destroy the gains of the revolution, which was seen as treason by much of the populace.

Many members of the Assembly called for a republic, and successfully voted to suspend the King until a new constitution was completed. It made it very clear to most of the French people that only extreme measures would now deal with the state of government in France in order to preserve the gains of the Revolution.

Demands for reform becoming more radical:

- The dispute over how voting should take place in the Estates General led to demands for a written constitution and the failure of the Estates General.
- Louis XVI showed no political nous – fears, not unfounded, that he intended to use troops against the people of Paris led to the Storming of the Bastille.
- The August Decrees did reflect enlightenment ideas but, also, the government's lack of any forceful means to control disturbances in the countryside was a factor – the Decrees were a

means to buy support and calm the situation.
- The flight to Varennes in 1791 led to calls for the removal of the king – e.g. the petition signing on the Champs de Mars
- The pressures resulting from involvement in war led to the insurrection of August 10 1792 and the end of the monarchy and the establishing of a republic
- The absence of any compromise between the Ancien Regime and radical democracy.

Increasing hostility towards the King:

- The increased reluctance on the part of the King and his entourage to compromise when it came to sovereignty or make any concessions towards a constitutional monarchy.
- It became clear that the revolutionary gains of 1790–91 were not likely to last under Louis. The behaviour of the remainder of the royal family indicated real hostility to the revolutionary process. There was no evidence to suggest that the King would accept a 'constitutional' role.
- The aristocracy tended to support the royal approach and the attitudes of the Austrians (the Queen's relatives) and the Prussians showed that there could be support for absolutism coming from abroad.
- The flight to Varennes demonstrated Louis' weaknesses which only intensified the opposition to him.
- While there had been some 'revolutionary' gains, they appeared tenuous and there was still a background of considerable social and economic distress which inevitably reflected back on the monarch. Little had been done by the monarch to deal with pressing issues such as hunger.

Why did France go to war?

There was a real fear that Austria and Prussia would intervene to support Louis and destroy the revolution. The queen's brother was also the emperor of Austria. Both countries had declared support for Louis and opposition to the revolution in the 1791 Declaration of Pilnitz. The activities of the emigres also heightened the tension by deserting to the Austrian enemy, and evidence that the queen was doing all she can to help her brother and the Austrians, and the fact that the King wanted the Austrians to invade made it very clear where his sympathies lay.

Radical and inexperienced members of the Assembly began to demand a war against Austria and Prussia - although neither country wished to invade France. The radicals hoped that the war would force the king to take sides and either support the revolution or abdicate and flee from France. They also wanted to make a name for themselves and show Europe that the Assembly is a competent system of government. The main reason for the war can be concluded as aggression by the National Assembly.

September Massacre and the abolition of the monarchy

The war with Austria meant that sides had to be taken, and many Frenchmen had to choose between the revolution and the monarchy. The king made it clear that he was against the revolution - and this angered many including the radicals in the National Assembly (the flight of Varennes also corroborates his views)

In an event known as the September Massacre, there was an outbreak of violence in Paris where the Paris mob took control of the city and directed the National Guard to storm the Tuileries Palace where the King lived. The National Guard proceeded to massacre several hundred of the King's guards, and resulted in the King's arrest and imprisonment. This made it clear that full executive power has firmly passed on to the people.

The Assembly dissolved itself and a new body, known as the National Convention, replaced it. The king was no more, and the country was declared a republic and the radical Jacobins seized their opportunity

by providing an effective solution to govern the country.

The king's opposition to change, his distrust and incompetence, and fear that he was supporting the Austrian enemy, the war and the events of the September Massacre all contributed to the feeling that the revolution would only survive with its gains preserved if he was killed.

Louis XVI's execution

The flight to Varennes seemed to show that the king supported foreign invasion to undo the Revolution and this made many Frenchmen see him as a traitor. After the flight to Varennes, radicals such as the Jacobins gained political influence - they were the first political group to demand the execution of the King. Events such as the Champ de Mars massacre and the September Massacre (attack on the Tuileries) caused many of the Parisians to see the king as the cause of the death of many of their fellow citizens.

The discovery in the Tuileries Palace of the king's secret correspondence with the Austrians seemed to show that he was encouraging counter-revolution and was a further sign of his bad faith against the revolution. It was made public and undoubtedly influenced the debates over the King's fate. He was executed in early 1793 (21 January).

As such, the King was put on trial and was found guilty of treason, and was condemned to death. He was executed in early 1793. The king was executed as he was reluctant to make concessions (e.g. Civil Constitution of the Clergy) which made him appear as a barrier to reform.

The execution fail to end political instability due to a number of reasons:

- Louis left an heir.
- There were still many defenders of the Ancien Regime.
- There were still major social and economic issues unresolved
- The status of the Church was still unresolved.
- The revolutionaries were badly split between moderates and radicals.
- There was press freedom which encouraged the spread of radical ideas.

How did the wars affect the course of the Revolution?

- Involvement in foreign wars had a profound impact on the whole course of the French Revolution because it was integral to the rise of Napoleon, which arguably brought the revolution to an end. It also drove many to extremes to protect the revolution, the Terror for example. Involvement in foreign wars was also costly, the taxation and conscription led to hostility and support for the counter-revolutionary processes.
- It also generated a great deal of loyalty to the revolutionary regimes and French military success, such as Jemappes and Fleurus. This naturally boosted the prestige of the regime and ensured its survival.
- Additionally, involvement led to the creation of an army which could be as large as 750,000 strong. This was used to repress counter revolutionary movements, for example the work of Hoche and his troops. It also led to the acquisition of Piedmont, the Rhineland and Belgium, an increase in the size of France by 20%, which boosted popularity.
- The successful armies and its generals also led to the Directory losing control of its generals, and its ultimate downfall. Arguably the whole course of the Revolution would have been profoundly different if there had been no foreign wars.

Political instability, the rise of the Jacobins and the Reign of Terror

Political instability

Divisions amongst the revolutionaries

The revolutionary groups such as the Jacobins were extremist and radical, and they caused the Terror. Radicalism in so many areas alienated the moderate opinion and gave ammunition to the counter-revolutionaries

There was a lack of consensus among the groups on how France should be governed and who should govern it. There was a huge divide between those who wanted the death of the King and those who did not, as well as those who could not agree on whether there should be a constitutional monarchy or not.

Major class issues- how far down the social scale should participation go? The huge splits between the various factions/clubs as well as between the regions and Paris, and town and country. Huge divisions over the role of the Church and its wealth and position in society. The degree of political inexperience of the revolutionaries.

Division was also enhanced by regional factors *(i.e. the Girondins were from the Gironde region of France - element of regionalism)*.There was a dislike of the dominant role of Paris in national affairs and the destruction of so much of the Ancien Regime, such as the Church and the nobility, without any clear picture of a possible new social order.

There was a disagreement over the role of the King/Monarchy, whether to retain the autocracy, reform it, or get rid of it altogether. The reluctance of the King to give a clear lead and his unwillingness to compromise. The flight to Varennes and his links with foreign powers caused further problems. The large range of legitimacy issues after the execution of the King. Where did/should power lie? Where should sovereignty lie?

In addition, the Terror brought chaos to both the centre and the regions, and the scope for any common ground from those in favor of reform was seriously diminished by their actions

The King and his role in political instability

The King's opposition to reforms including the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Civil Constitution of the Clergy divided opposition and increased instability, it made the likelihood of any constitutional settlement almost impossible. He failed to embrace the need for radical and fundamental reform, and there was fear that he was planning to use royal troops to restore his position led to the storming of the Bastille.

He was personally unsuited to his role and did not have the ability to deal with it. The behaviour of his wife and the courtiers was also a major factor causing instability and the emigres started early with their counter-revolutionary activity. The flight to Varennes and his support for Austria showed his true beliefs; he seemed to be committing treason against his own country.

He failed to support any of the reform measures and it was lukewarm at best when he did accept them and the notion of constitutional monarchy was eroded by Louis XVI's often hostile attitude towards political change, leading to his execution in Jan 1793, which further polarised politics.

The flight of the emigres and their counter-revolutionary activities abroad. There were active opponents of any change to the Ancien Regime and there was, of course, the attitude of Austria and Prussia (counter-revolutionaries). The negative roles of many in both the nobility and clergy in resisting change

was a major factor.

Social and economic factors

Taxation was a highly contentious issue throughout the period, as well as the issuing of the Assignats. They issued assignats to deal with the issue of national debt and reduce taxation. However, due to the government's lack of control over the amount to be printed, their value grew beyond the confiscated property's limits, causing inflation.

It was issues over the inequality of taxation and the national debt which could be seen as critical factors in setting off the whole revolutionary process, as could hunger and economic deprivation amongst the poor. Industrial and agricultural output fell, foreign trade declined, prices rose during this time, all of which had a negative impact on government finances.

Poverty, both in urban and rural areas and a real shortage of food and poor harvests were a driving force in the events leading up to 1789. There was widespread hunger and social unrest, and a direct correlation between the extremism of the Paris mob, the sans-culottes, and the rising price of bread. Food prices increased, and poor harvests caused food shortages, which exacerbated inflation. The assignats became a cause of food riots and public disorder as a result.

Shortages and famines were created as a result of the Law of the Maximum established by the CPS in 1793. The CPS proceeded to send troops to seize foods in the provinces which only alleviated food shortages in Paris while exacerbating shortages in other parts of the country. The assignats became a cause of food riots and public disorder as a result.

The challenges and strains imposed by the war after 1792 were also influential.

- What Paris wanted and what the regions wanted could differ fundamentally. It could also be argued that, given the state of France in 1789 with the huge range of social, economic and political problems that it faced, the chance of any stability at all was unlikely
- Sheer range and depth of the social, economic and political problems which France faced in 1789 was beyond the scope of any one man to deal with.

The Jacobins

The Jacobins managed to attain an unusual degree of unity at key times and were particularly good at communicating with others and within their own grouping. They were able to gain support both within Paris and in other urban areas, and had several powerful and able leaders, such as Robespierre.

They were able to offer radical and plausible policies after the execution of the King, were well connected in both local and provincial government and were good at propaganda, using the free press well. Their festivals and de-Christianisation movement were popular with many *in the urban areas.*

The Jacobins opposed Louis XVI as they wished to gain leadership of the revolutionary process and spearheaded the move away from the Estates General/National Assembly status. They were primarily Democrats and parliamentarians and wished to move at least towards a constitutional settlement, and were patriotic and also essentially egalitarian. They wished to protect the gains of the revolution by force and radical means if necessary. Many were anti-Christian, some just anti-clerical, and underneath it all, radicals

The Reign of Terror (1792-94)

There were a range of threats to the Republic following the start of revolution; the beginnings go back to

the use of force in the Bastille attack and then the Sept. 1792 prison massacres in Paris and in Versailles.

After the declaration of war against Austria in 1792, there was fear of invasion - the British attacked in the Channel and the Mediterranean as well. This meant that the revolution could be overturned. All methods had to be used to make sure it didn't occur.

There was anti-Jacobin violence outside Paris in the regions and the counter-revolution gained ground and confidence. Therefore, radical measures had to be taken to prevent the country from falling apart. Cities such as Lyons and Toulon were breaking away and it was felt that radical measures had to be taken to save the gains of 1789-92.

Given the circumstances of the sans-culottes, whose support was essential to the Jacobins, they demanded that the CPS act firmly (direct pressure from the sans-culottes). The Jacobins also saw this as a way of consolidating their power by casting opponents as threats to the Revolution.

Robespierre believed in the notion of the 'General Will'. This represented the interests of everyone, not just the few. The Revolution would bring about a republic built for this ideal. Therefore, anyone who sought to oppose this ideal had to be dealt with in order to preserve the 'Republic of Virtue'.

Why did the Terror come to an end?

The Jacobins were often badly divided between moderate and radical wings, and were seen as many as too radical and they were also seen as players in the 'Paris v. the provinces' divide The Terror and its implications could be seen as largely their responsibility and its leadership was often both divisive and divided.

The de-Christianisation movement won it few friends, and were simply too radical for the majority of the French people at the time and lacked the basic power to impose themselves effectively on France. The campaign, while popular with some in Paris, offended many in the rural areas. The revolution had become too radical and alienated too much opinion.

The bad military situation had been reversed, so there was seen to be less need for radical measures; the republic was no longer in danger. The CPS was badly divided about the need to continue with it.

With the deaths of Danton and Robespierre there was the opportunity to return to a more 'constitutional' approach. The sense of danger and threat to the gains of 1790-1791 had passed.

The Thermidorean Reaction, which took place in 1794, put an end to Jacobin rule but not to political instability. The Jacobins still had support, and disorder broke out in April-May 1795. This led to the 'White Terror' against these supporters. Thus, violence rather than any notion of legitimate popular sovereignty was the determinant in politics.

Directory (success and failures), and **Napoleon's rise to power**

Successes	Failures
Aims of the Directory	**Opposition to the Directory**
The Directory was established primarily to provide a solution to the problems facing France after the Ancien Régime, the execution of the King and the Terror. Survival and a defence of the existing gains of the 1791–92 period was important to all key figures involved. There was a strong reaction to the excesses of the Terror and the Jacobins, and a dislike of their De-Christianisation process - the more conservative appearance of the Directory had wide appeal. It introduced a period of comparative calm after the Terror and the Revolution had largely been a destructive force before the Directory. The Terror has ended, and executions declined rapidly. The sans-culottes ceased to be so powerful and the royalists less significant. When contrasted with the previous years, it was an oasis of calm. There were no major uprisings in the period, competent local government was established, and signs of a workable police system were emerging. The aim of the Directory was to provide a workable system of government which was based on at least some of the principles which underpinned the events of the early 1790s and would hopefully survive the hostile attentions of various foreign powers. The Constitution of 1795 was made to work reasonably well, and it was a remarkable step forward constitutionally for what had been an autocracy for centuries. Coping with annual elections was a great achievement. There was a desire to find an acceptable constitutional settlement and make this revolutionary democratic system actually work. The judiciary and local government were reformed and made to work with reasonable efficiency. The remarkable concept of the separation of powers was actually made to work.	In summary, the Directory failed to offer a solution to the contemporary political, social, and economic problems facing France at the time, which were a legacy of the Revolution. The background of war, coup attempts, and possible counter-revolutionary activities which created instability and eroded the Directory's authority. It was not able to manage the complexity of both the religious and constitutional issues facing France at the time, and they managed it only adequately. The Directory's tenure of power was marked by various coups and constant instability at the centre and in the regions. While it did offer some stability and managed some competent government, there was the constant background of war and possible counter revolutionary activity. It was seen (perhaps unfairly?) to have failed to get a really effective system of government going and it never effectively solved the issue of the link between the executive and legislative parts of government. The system of government the Directory represented lacked legitimacy and failed to establish a degree of permanency. Few really respected the Directory's authority, and it was seen as an unfortunate necessity rather than a regime which would last and end the years of instability. Many saw the Directory as unpopular and inefficient, with few real friends and supporters and tended to be viewed merely as a temporary measure until something better could be found. It also faced an absence of consensus in France for any system of government and they had to contend with a whole series of major problems after the Terror and the execution of the King. There was a complete lack of consensus about how France could and should be governed. Most people wanted stability and the gains of 1789-91. The legislature was too strong, and the executive was too weak to govern effectively. It looked too much like a group of middle-class men managing France in their own interests and they did not grasp fully the extent of the social and

	economic problems facing France at the time. Many property owners feared a Jacobin revival or monarchical restoration which would result in the loss of their recent acquisitions. The continuation of weak government by the Directory seemed to bring either of these two unwanted outcomes even closer
Successes of the Directory	**Coup attempts**
The Directory built on the huge achievements of 1791-92, and they made democratic institutions work, such as yearly elections and the secret ballot, in accordance with the Revolution's democratic ideas - these franchises were far broader than their European neighbours, and the press was remarkably free. These reforms were a remarkable achievement given the background. It was certainly not their intention to make a profound change in direction backwards. The constitution of 1795 created a broad electorate, with, by 18th century standards, an extensive franchise. There was a degree of peace and stability within France, which was greater than it had been since 1789. The Directory was able to maintain, and increase French prosperity by 1799, especially through their successes in the wars against their European enemies. Its foreign policy was successful, and the war progressed well, and had the support of the army. The decision to dispatch Napoleon to Italy had provided it with some military glory through his victories in the Italian campaign. A large army performed brilliantly under his leadership. The Italian campaign was a success, and there was competent management of both the war and foreign policy.	The Directory faced many coups, which undermined its authority and damaged its reputation, and made it appear to be solely concerned with political survival as an end, rather than continuing the ideas of the Revolution. Authoritarian methods often had to be used in order to put down coup attempts. Coups continued, such as 18 *Fructidor V*, 22 *Floreal VI*, 30 *Prairial VII* and the final one of Brumaire. The latter coincided with a royalist uprising in the southwest. There was a continuation of the coups and real political difficulties in 1796 and 1797 and it was a coup that overthrew it. Coups such as 18 Fructidor V did not help give the impression of future stability. The Directory was discredited and there was fear for the return of the Terror. The Directory attempted to impose its own hand-picked candidates in the election, which fueled anti-democratic sentiment, and nullified the election results in 1797 during the Coup of Fructidor, this ran counter to the Revolution's ideals. It was becoming increasingly authoritarian as it tried to do a proper job and seemed to be moving away from the ideals of the Revolution Arguably, the comparative ease with which the Directory was overthrown might also suggest a lack of success. The Directory came to an end due to the coup and the regional instability throughout its period of rule, and it could not establish firm foundations.
The left and the right	**Threats from the left and right**
It occupied the middle ground between the	

excesses of the Ancien Regime and those of the Terror. It tried to find a 'middle' constitutional way between the extreme royalists and radicals. There was also an attempt to find consensus between the huge range of conflicting groups, ranging from the Jacobins to the monarchists, let alone the extremists like Babeuf. Radicals like Babeuf were dealt with as well.	The Directory had to deal with major threats from the royalists and the 'right' as well as threats such as Babeuf from the left. It had to manage wars, which at times did not go at all well. There was also no credible figure capable of leading France on either the right or the left. There was growing opposition from both the left (Jacobin revival) and the right (royalists) and increasing threat of uprisings. The failure of the Directory to appeal to or to eliminate threats from both the Jacobins and the Royalists was also a factor and was not effectively managed. There was also too much focus on possible threats from the Left or the Right. There were significant royalist and neo-Jacobin gains in many elections, and these were ominous. There were royalist risings and it appeared to many that the Directory had started to abandon the ideals of the Revolution. With the election of many royalist deputies in 1797 there was a genuine concern for the gains of the revolution and a growing disillusion with democracy. A free press encouraged radicalism which led again to a desire for stability and a more authoritarian system along the lines which had run France for centuries. There was also no attempt to resolve the problems caused by the de-Christianisation programme They could provide no solution to the fundamental issue of 'how is France to be governed?' which pleased a wide enough range of the population.
Economic successes	**Economic difficulties/wars**
Economic prosperity and security were goals of the Revolution and the desire to establish them were preserved by the Directory. There was recovery after the terrible winter of 1794-5 and its resultant hunger. There were genuine attempts to deal with the issue of hunger and to restore a rational system of central control of the regions, while at the same time showing awareness of local interests and needs. They had some good ideas of financial administration which were a great deal more egalitarian in concept than any of those of the Ancien Regime. A move towards dealing with the assignats and the appalling level of debt was	Many of the economic issues which had led to the revolution remained. An acceptable system of taxation could not be reached, and the wars caused a serious economic problem. Real hunger continued in many parts of France and there were two bad harvests during the rule of the Directory. The economy, which was causing most concern to most French people, was not focused on. Inflation became an increasingly important issue and there was simply no idea how to tackle it. The currency issue, a major problem, was also not resolved. Partial bankruptcy and debt repudiation occurred in

made with some success.	1797. Corruption at all levels of government became endemic. The war that France was also fighting was deeply unpopular because of the increased taxation and conscription. To make matters worse the war was not going well. The Directory also failed to realise the implication of allowing Napoleon to control so much of the Italian campaign and its aftermath, which he later took to his advantage. They also let the military led by Napoleon get too powerful.

Napoleon's rise to power (his views and skills) - military reputation and political ambitions of Napoleon
Napoleon was a successful general which created popular appeal and made him appear a viable alternative. He had the support of his army, and he had a track record of success. He was also good, initially, at cloaking his ambitions. His boldness and military support were factors, as were his use of force. Napoleon's ambition and his timing, together with his successful career and record, also made him a strong alternative. He had the ability to play on the desire of many for social stability, stable government, and glory abroad. He had brought glory to France. He also had good propaganda skills and an excellent grasp of the social, economic, and political situation. He presented himself as antiradical but a supporter of the principal revolutionary gains. He was a consolidator and not a reactionary or an extreme Jacobin. He was an authoritarian figure who could find a middle way between the excesses of the Revolution and the failings of the Ancien Regime, and who could gain legitimacy at the same time, was the only possible solution to the problem of the French government in 1799. The way he presented himself as the consolidator of the revolution was clever and he ensured he did not come across as too radical either.
Support of the people and the army, his popularity - military reputation and political ambitions of Napoleon
Napoleon was a very successful general in Italy and had sent, very publicly, a fair amount of loot back to France. Glory and prestige for France were associated with his name. He had benefited from considerable freedom of action in Italy and was used to decision-taking on a large scale – the dealings with Austria, for example. He had a great capacity for self-promotion which appealed to many. That was important in getting him noticed initially, and it was also important to an extent in his retention of power. The great victories at Austerlitz (1805) and Jena (1806) also helped to confirm his position. He was also popular and was welcomed as a hero after his return from Egypt. Napoleon also showed political nous (intelligence) and his timing was impeccable by leaving Egypt and reaching France before knowledge of his failing became common knowledge, and he tried to downplay it in his newspapers which were biased to his advantage. France had been ruled by an authoritarian regime for centuries and there may well have been a yearning for a return to 'normalcy', and his association with military success and 'élan' plus clever use of propaganda did him no harm.

The confused results of the election of 1798 furthered aroused anxiety which Napoleon played on. His own military record looked useful, particularly as there had been military failings elsewhere.

He benefited from the disputes between the executive and legislative powers in France, with the regime there falling into disrepute and the royalist victories in the election of 1797 causing more concern. Coups such as 18 Fructidor V did not help give the impression of future stability in the Directory, which was discredited.

Napoleon had an excellent status with the support of the army, it made him a national figure as he had brought considerable glory to France. His army was also critical in ensuring the coup worked and that there was no armed opposition.

The army also looked to him as a leader and supported him in his quest to overthrow the weak Directory - which happened with the Coup of Brumaire where Napoleon led troops to move against the Council of 500, this led to the end of the Directory and the establishment of the three-man consulate led by Napoleon.

Napoleon still managed to arouse tremendous admiration and retain great support in France. Reaction against the failings of the Directory and the many excesses of the revolutionary period also played a part. He represented stability (after a while) but also a degree of continuity. He cleverly adopted the 'best' of the French Revolution while discarding the unpopular extremes such as the Terror and the Dechristianisation programme.

He was well aware of the background of coups and took great care to stress that many of the revolutionary gains became part of French law. He provided good, stable, government and ensured that the most important, to the middle class, gains of the revolution were maintained.

Support of his brother Lucien, Sieyes and Fouche (the 1799 Brumaire coup)

He also enjoyed the support of his brother and men like Fouche and Sieyes. His propaganda skills and political astuteness also marked him out.

Lucien Bonaparte's work prior to the coup was instrumental to the ending of the Directory. His earlier tireless efforts to rally support for the coup of 1799, resulted in the Directory's overthrow in 1799. He also played a key role in the vital 'seizure of power' days as well. He also had an important role in the coup itself as he was a key member of the lower chamber and persuaded them to accept the Coup. The military were then able to force the Council of Ancients to accept it.

With the astute constitutional work of Sieyes, he had a great asset there as well. Sieyes, one of the Directors, played an important role in supporting the coup as he believed he could use Napoleon to further his own political ambitions.

Napoleon had a superb military reputation due to his successes in Italy and in Egypt. His victories attested to his military ability and created popular appeal - which was one of the reasons why Sieyes and Fouche looked to him for support when planning the coup for support (to arrange the necessary military support).

The initial reaction to the coup was muted as it was seen by the Directory - 'Consuls' instead of Directors. Many assumed that the coup was simply another part of an evolutionary revolutionary process and did not see it as unduly significant.

The new constitution was produced extremely quickly and was a sensible and popular move. Napoleon

was good at anticipating what would, and would not, be acceptable to the French people at the time. The speed with which he produced a constitution was also critical; he seemed to offer a real alternative in the eyes of most people and an end to the instability which had been the most prominent feature of French politics for well over a decade.

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Napoleon's **domestic aims and achievements** from 1799-1814

Napoleon's authoritarian government (consolidation of his rule)
He was the figurehead of the coup in 1799 because of his popular military successes, and because he showed that he was a defender of the Revolution against its enemies (such as the counter-revolutionaries). There were three consuls to share power, a difference from the monarchy and Robespierre's dictatorship. Certainly initially, the re-establishment of order after the turmoil of the revolutionary years was a central aim, and the way in which he adopted the features of the revolution which would calm the more radical elements while at the same time not alarming the more conservative forces is part of this. His policies as First Consul can be said to have not openly contradict his claim that he was continuing the best features of the Revolution - for example plebiscites were used as a form of popular consent, albeit carefully managed. They did, nonetheless, pay some lip-service to the revolutionary idea of consent. All that happened at home was subordinate to his aim to dominate all of Europe and that his principal domestic aim was to create a war machine that could dominate Europe and the Middle East. He sought to ensure that the grievances which had been felt by so many before 1789 did not return. Arguably it was his version of 'enlightened despotism' which really worked. He achieved a sensible balance between the long-established autocracy of the past with the clearly popular ideas of the early revolutionary period. Given the turmoil that France had been through in the previous two decades, his ability to identify the principal concerns of a majority of the French people and respond to them was exceptional. It could be argued that France had had enough turmoil and would have accepted any solution which seemed to offer stability, let alone progress and glory. He successfully tried to find an acceptable middle way between revolution/anarchy and autocracy. While it could be argued that he went too far in the direction towards autocracy, he laid a basis for a regime that was not fundamentally altered for decades. What could be challenged is how 'great' a reformer he was. Arguably he did enough to ensure sufficient support to stay in power and his motivation for many of the changes might well have been to consolidate his own power and further his imperial ambitions. He sensed what the public wanted and delivered it.

Nature and impact of reforms (legal, educational, social, financial)	
'Good'	**'Bad'**
Legal reforms	
The use of plebiscites promoted a sense of democracy, and showed the support Napoleon had together with the glory for France he gained with his victories and territorial acquisition	The democratic element of elections was minimal, as they were more the presentation of candidates, restricted to the notables, seen as suitable for selection as deputies.

French Revolution - Napoleon's **domestic aims and achievements**

He brought political, social and economic stability to France and there was a little apparent or real opposition	Plebiscites were under the control of the government and the franchise was limited. The representative institutions were very token and the device of the plebiscite. Napoleon was interested in domestic reform as he needed to appeal to a variety of different classes, especially the middle class who had led the revolution and the very conservative peasantry and needed to restore stability to France. He wished to secure himself in power. The greater part of his reforms lasted well into the 19th century.
His legal reforms made France much more of an egalitarian and tolerant society. Successive governments had tried to organise a national legal system. Napoleon aimed to succeed where they had failed. He wanted to show that he was the heir of the Revolution by establishing the principle of the equality of all before the law.	His ability to downplay the failures of his rule was also an important factor - he played the 'patriotic' card successfully and managed opposition intelligently He understood that the growing bourgeoisie in France and a deeply conservative peasantry were major forces and ensured that the interests of both were intelligently catered for. He was the dominant decision maker in all matters of policy such as the Concordat and the Civil Code. He rarely consulted and took decisions to go to war and made peace without consultation or consideration. This gave rise to the idea that he was a dictator. In 1801, and for the rest of his rule, Napoleon used a select group to act as intermediaries between the government and the people. This group was drawn from the richest men in the department. Thus, popular choice was reduced whilst the wealthy gained further influence. Napoleon's policies were designed to enhance his power - the careful use and management of plebiscites and the decline of any representative institutions The increased centralization of power in Paris, in the person of the Emperor and the control of education also increased his personal power. The Civil Code would foster uniformity and centralisation in France, thereby consolidating his personal control. He took considerable steps to deal with the opposition and made himself Emperor to create a hereditary monarchy within his family's control

French Revolution - Napoleon's **domestic aims and achievements**

The Ancien Régime had definitely ended and major elements of the Revolution, such as the ending of feudalism, were firmly incorporated into France. An emphatically fairer and judicial legal system was brought in. There was a need to introduce the Code because the old feudal system with its outdated laws and customs had been dealt a death-blow by the Revolution. There was a need to establish a uniform legal system which reflected the new situation in France. The French Civil Code in 1804 was instituted, and it forbade privileges based on birth, allowed freedom of religion and stated that the most qualified must be given government jobs. The Civil Code was a major step forward, and it enshrined equality for all before the law and the establishment of uniform laws brought rationality to the French legal system. This clearly benefited all. It solved many problems and lasted. It was a good blend of the old and the new. It put into effect a written law which included many of the great ideas of the Revolution, and gave legal sanction to some of the most important legal developments of the 1790s – confirming the abolition of feudalism and giving fixed legal title to those who had earlier purchased confiscated church, crown and émigré property.	The Civil Code allowed for greater centralization, and thereby, greater personal control for Napoleon. Introducing the Code would allow Napoleon's views to become dominant. The Code was influenced greatly by the authoritarian ideas of Roman Law. and emphasised male authority and the rights of the father, and so undermined and reversed many gains made by women during the Revolution. Equality now did not extend to females. This fitted well with Napoleon's views on society and his belief in the inferior position of women.
His actions regarding local administration and the fiscal system can be seen as completing work begun in 1789-1793 and 1795-1799. He established a centralised and effective system of local government which responded well to direction from the centre, and also reported concerns upwards effectively. This system of Prefects and Sub Prefects led to much greater efficiency in the localities and local administration in France uniformly improved. He invested in infrastructure and law and order returned to the regions. The level of corruption in local government dropped considerably and there was a lot of competence in his administration.	

French Revolution - Napoleon's **domestic aims and achievements**

Educational reforms	
'Good'	**'Bad'**
Education was widened and the idea of 'careers open to the talents' and new ideas such as promotion on grounds of merit offered opportunities for some social mobility. He therefore gained support from formerly alienated classes, as well as the middle class which had led much of the revolutionary process.	The Imperial University, in function a kind of Ministry of Education, was founded in 1808. It controlled the curriculum and appointed all state secondary school teachers. It offered no room for freedom of thought or expression for either staff or pupils.
Social reforms	
'Good'	**'Bad'**
The Concordat of 1801 with the Pope did uphold the principle of religious freedom, a clear revolutionary ideal. This deal with the Church was vital for social stability. There was now a much better and sensible relationship between the Church and the State. The Concordat, while not seen as a reform necessarily by ecclesiastics, was a rational solution to a complex problem. His insistence on tolerance for all was an important step forward. The Roman Catholic Church was the majority church of France, again with civil status. He selected the bishops and supervised the church's finances, which pacified the revolutionaries. He took care not to offend Catholic sensibilities and was aware that there were limits to his authority	The Concordat with the Pope was seen by many revolutionaries as a betrayal of all that had been achieved since 1789 in limiting the power and influence of the Catholic Church in France. Gaining the support of the Church through the Concordat also ensured the supremacy of their State (France).
He was an effective propagandist and in 1802, he instituted the Legion of Honour to encourage civilian and military achievements. There was careful censorship, which his regime needed. An effective and efficient police force and careful management of any dissent was in place under the work of Fouche. He wished for no return to the frequent coups of the past. There was a degree of repression, but he was careful not to overdo it.	His was an authoritarian regime and while there were the plebiscites, there was a growing autocracy and censorship and 'police state' under Fouche, and a deprivation of civil liberties. Great care was taken to deal with potential and actual opposition. His use of the plebiscite was very clever and he knew the value of propaganda. His tight control of the localities showed signs of much similarity to the Ancien Regime. The personal freedom of all was restricted through the policy of spies and censorship. By 1811 only four newspapers remained in Paris and all were subject to police supervision.

French Revolution - Napoleon's **domestic aims and achievements**

Financial reforms	
'Good'	**'Bad'**
He took great care to ensure that the worst elements of poverty were eliminated, controlling the price of bread for example, fearing a growing working-class unrest. The price and availability of bread helped to keep peasant support. Care was taken to ensure food supply and prices. He took great care to deal with potential sources of disorder, such as conservative dislike for religious changes. The founding of the Bank of France in 1800 and then its direct control by the state in 1806 helped establish France's creditworthiness and thereby contributed to financial stability. The introduction of a new metal coinage in 1803 provided for a strong and stable currency and helped make the country solvent. The policy of rationalisation also extended to the fiscal system - something previous governments sought to do but had not succeeded in doing. Therefore, Napoleon's action here was a benefit. There was much fairer taxation than had been the case in the past, and taxation fell equally. There were significant attempts to develop the economy of France which would benefit all and not just a few. There were real attempts to improve infrastructure such as roads and navigable waterways, which were popular Therefore, these actions of Napoleon benefitted all and were in marked contrast as to what had gone before in France.	The economy was very carefully managed with state control dominant. It was an authoritarian regime which paid lip service to the idea of consent, and was a long way from the constitutional monarchy dreamt of by many in the early 1790s. France experienced no agricultural revolution, with farming continuing to use the same subsistence methods. This was no doubt the result of the plentiful harvests up to 1811. Napoleon did rationalise the fiscal system. However, the shift was now from direct to indirect taxation, i.e. consumption was taxed. Thus, the burden now fell on the consumer, and most consumers were poor. There was overregulation of industry and commerce, with micromanagement from the centre. In industry, Napoleon did provide subsidies to manufacturers, but it did not appear to be a priority for him. The guaranteeing of property rights under the Consulate was more of a benefit to the middle-class than the rural and urban poor. Conscription was not popular and damaged the rural economy. The cost and impact of wars led to unpopularity and resentment of both taxation and conscription.